How Stages Correlates with

North Dakota Alternate Assessment and Curriculum Standards

Stages is relevant for a broad spectrum of North Dakota learners with special needs.

- Learners who are evaluated using Alternate Assessment as well as those preparing for the California Achievement Test [CAT] assessment with or without accommodations benefit from the powerful data-gathering features of Stages.

- Through Stages, learners gain meaningful and effective access to the general curriculum.

- Stages helps the instructional teams to determine the learning environment most suited toward the learner.

The following sections describe the relevance of Stages to these learner populations in greater detail.

Stages and the North Dakota Alternate Assessment Process

OVERVIEW

Stages includes two major software components: (a) informal benchmark software and (b) curriculum software. Stages informal assessment software is instructional in nature, providing activities with constructive feedback and opportunities for the learner to explore and choose. Stages curriculum software is a collection of interactive daily instructional programs appropriate for learners at each Stage.

Stages software enhances the North Dakota's Alternate Assessment Process because:

1. **Stages correlates with the content of North Dakota state standards.**
2. **Stages generates evidence for the learner's portfolio.**
3. **Stages allows learner to demonstrate functional skills prior to formal assessment.**
4. **Stages assists the learner's IEP and/or instructional teams with selecting assistive technology and assessment tools.**

1. Stages correlates with North Dakota state standards.
The first IDEA Advisory Committee goal is to increase the percentage of students with disabilities participating in statewide assessments and general education curriculum. Stages ensures "meaningful and effective access to general curriculum" areas. Stages content aligns with general education curriculum standards in K-4 mathematics, reading, and writing, as well as functional living skills. Please refer to the next section, "How Stages Correlates with North Dakota Standards" for detailed matching between the informal assessment software and specific academic curricula.

2. Stages generates evidence for the learner's portfolio.
During Stages software activities, the instructor can print directly from any screen to capture a learner-generated product. At the end of each activity, a report with data about the time spent, choices made, response accuracy or work product, input method, prompt type, and time/date stamp are displayed with the learner's name. The instructional team member may wish to then print that screen or save the information as a text-format electronic file.

Observation guidelines and forms in the Stages kits help the instructional team make the most out of an activity session as the data-gathering features of the software enable the observer to focus on noting the learner's behavior and thinking-out-loud responses. Two adults from the instructional team can work together: one adult can encourage the learner and the other can note valuable data about behaviors without being noticed by the learner. Alternatively if a video or still camera is available, it may be directed at the learner and the computer monitor to discreetly record interactions and other behaviors while one adult coaches. Over time, the collected data

will provide evidence that the instructional team needs to build a complete picture of the learner's skill achievement.

3. Stages allows the learner to demonstrate skills prior to formal assessment.
The feedback in Stages activities is encouraging and rewarding, providing a relaxed setting for exploring topics and demonstrating skills. During the sessions, the learner will be less conscious of her performance being recorded, making her responses more candid.

4. Stages assists the learner's IEP and/or instructional teams with selecting assistive technology and assessment tools.
An objective of Stages software is to provide several options for input methods and other settings so that the learner's IEP/instructional team can determine his ideal learning and communication environment. Different devices, auditory feedback, speeds and prompts are among the variables.

SUMMARY

Stages augments the North Dakota alternative assessment cycle. The Stages software is a comprehensive tool to assist the instructional team in collecting valuable portfolio evidence, determining assessment strategy, and discovering the learner's abilities and thinking approach.

How Stages Correlates with North Dakota Standards[1]

Mathematics Grades K-4
Benchmarks and Standards

Standard 1: NUMBER AND OPERATION
Students understand and use basic and advanced concepts of number and number systems.

4.1.1 Construct and interpret number meanings through real-world experiences.
4.1.2 Understand the characteristics and properties of our numeration system.
4.1.3 Understand how arithmetic operations are related to one another in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
4.1.4 Rename, order, and compare numbers.
4.1.5 Know and use basic facts and computational algorithms for whole numbers, fractions and decimals.
4.1.6 Use estimation strategies in working with quantities, measurement, computation, and problem solving.
4.1.7 Understand and communicate strategies to solve a wide variety of problems.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:	
Stage Four:	*Math Readiness:* Number ID, Counting
Stage Five:	*Math:* Charts and Graphs, Fractions, Math Facts (+, -, x, ÷), Word Problems (+, -, x, ÷)
	Problem Solving: Number Guess
Stage Six:	*Stories:* Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan
	Explore and Assess: Money ID, Money Equivalents, Counting Money, Telling Time

Standard 2: GEOMETRY AND SPATIAL SENSE
Students understand and apply geometric concepts and spatial relationships to represent and solve problems in mathematical and nonmathematical situations.

4.2.1 Know the characteristics of two- and three-dimensional shapes.
4.2.3 Understand that geometry is found within and outside mathematics.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:	
Stage Four:	*Shapes:* Explore and Assess
Stage Five:	*Math:* Geometry
	Problem Solving: Shape Mystery

[1] Information found in North Dakota Standards and Benchmarks: Content Standards for Mathematics (1999) and English Language Arts Curriculum Framework (1996), by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. Document source: http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/content.shtm (Accessed January 21, 2002).

Standard 3: DATA ANALYSIS, STATISTICS AND PROBABILITY
Students use data collection and analysis techniques, statistical methods, and probability to solve problems.

4.3.2 Formulate and solve problems that involve data.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:	
Stage Five:	*Math:* Charts and Graphs, Fractions, Math Facts (+, -, x, ÷), Word Problems (+, -, x, ÷) *Problem Solving:* Number Guess

Standard 4: MEASUREMENT
Students use concepts and tools of measurement to describe and quantify the world.

4.4.1 Select and use the appropriate tool to determine measurements of length, area, perimeter, volume, and angle size.
4.4.2 Use estimation strategies in working with quantities, measurement, computation, and problem solving.
4.4.3 Apply a variety of techniques, tools, and formulas to determine measurements.
4.4.4 Know and use units of time, money, and temperature.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:	
Stage Four:	*Math Readiness:* Estimating, Spatial Relationships, Explore Compare
Stage Five:	*Math:* Charts and Graphs, Geometry *Problem Solving:* Number Guess
Stage Six:	*Explore and Assess:* Money ID, Money Equivalents, Counting Money, Telling Time

Standard 5: ALGEBRA, FUNCTIONS, AND PATTERNS
Students use algebraic concepts, functions, patterns, and relationships to solve problems.

4.5.1 Understand when a simple pattern exists, identify the rule that generates the pattern, and use that information to solve problems.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:	
Stage Four:	*Math Readiness:* Explore Patterns, Continue/Fill In Patterns, Create Patterns

Reading Language Arts Grades K-4
Benchmarks and Standards

Standard 1: Students gather and organize information.

1.4.4 Use vocabulary knowledge to gather information.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:	
Stage Six:	*Stories:* Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Standard 2: Students engage in the reading process.

2.4.1 Use strategies for activating prior knowledge to comprehend text
2.4.4 Seek help to understand information
2.4.5 Use a variety of clues to determine the meaning of words

Related Stages Assessment Activities:	
Stage Five:	*Reading:* Meaning, Context (High Frequency Words)
Stage Six:	*Stories:* Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Standard 4: Students engage in the writing process.

4.4.1 Use knowledge and experience to write
4.4.3 Use editing skills to improve reader comprehension

Related Stages Assessment Activities:	
Stage Seven:	*Making Sentences:* Building Sentences, Spelling and Grammar, Writing Sentences *Making Stories*

Standard 6: Students engage in the speaking and listening process.

6.4.3 Respond to spoken words and body language

Related Stages Assessment Activities:	
Stage Six:	*Stories:* Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Standard 7: Students understand and use principles of language

7.4.1 Understand the characteristic sounds and rhythms of language

Related Stages Assessment Activities:	
Stage Two:	*Nouns, Verbs:* words are presented using animated rhymes
Stage Four:	*Reading Readiness:* Letter Sounds
Stage Five:	*Reading:* Sounds
Stage Seven:	*Making Words:* Rhyming Words
	Making Sentences: Building Sentences, Spelling and Grammar, Writing Sentences
	Making Stories